



**Governor's Task Force
on the Humane Treatment of Animals
Thursday, September 14, 2006
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Dick Wentzell, Sheila Presby, Roni McCall, Maureen Prendergast, Lisa Hall, Jeri Zezula, George Cook, Elin Phinizy, Nancy Johnson, Mel Liston, Steve Crawford, Susan Morrell, Virginia Hokenstrom and Joanne Bourbeau

The August Meeting Minutes were approved with no changes

Old Business - None

Sub-committee reports:

Re-codification/Legislation Subcommittee Survey - Joanne Bourbeau
7 surveys were returned to the subcommittee

Joanne will resend the survey to all taskforce members as not all of the taskforce members could open the document.

Amanda Grady, the Public Policy Director for the Domestic & Sexual Coalition against violence came to the subcommittee meeting to discuss cross reporting. Currently Social Services is not required to report abuse unless it is to a child or elder abuse.

Education Subcommittee - Dr. Jerilee Zezula has kept the governors office in the loop on this subcommittee as she is working with the State office on Education.

Maureen Prendergast contacted the Chair for the Social Studies Department from the NH Dept. of Education. He felt our best fit would be

under the topic of Civics and the push would be 'Why Be Humane'. He offered some suggestions for frameworks to try and fit our message into.

Maureen has another contact within the Dept. of Education who is herself and animal advocate and will be providing more information to me, to help assist us get some sort of a lesson plan together so that NH teachers may make humane ed part of their class.

It was mentioned that middle school and high school teachers are easy to reach, organized, and we could easily make a presentation at one of their conferences. However, they might not be as open to the idea as compared to elementary teachers. Who by comparison are harder to reach and not as organized as a group.

Funding Subcommittee - Dick Wentzell presented the taskforce with a graph showing the actual figures of the real estate tax and what it would be to a dedicated fund with a 25 cent increase.

Major discussion about putting all their eggs in one basket should this bill not pass.

Representative Johnson stated she tried to do this (increase real estate tax) a few years ago for another reason and it was defeated in hearings - the consensus is that if it has even a hint of a tax increase or verbage such as fee increases it would not pass in either the senate or the house.

It was suggested that 2 bills be presented - one in the house and one in the senate towards funding for animal cruelty cases. This way it might make it in one arena.

Another suggestion was to revise the existing legislation for the spay neuter fund to increase its funding and use the excess to fund animal cruelty cases - it was also suggested that this year we ask to just increase the funding for the spay neuter fund - to see that it is fully funded - get a feel for the atmosphere of the different legislators and next year recommend the funds also be used for animal cruelty cases. Currently the spay neuter fund traditionally runs out of money around February or March each year and ends for that year. This past year it cost 3 hundred thousand dollars to

finance the spaying/neutering of 4000 cats/dogs in NH and was short \$45,000 as stated by Dr. Crawford.

Dick Wentzell and subcommittee members were asked to present this taskforce with a compilation of the cost of some of the cases that have made it into the courts so that we have some background stats to support the recommendation for a dedicated fund.

Dr. Zezula asked the subcommittee to find out who would be against the proposal and who would support it? (Taskforce members as well as Legislators and other agencies).

New Business

Dr. Zezula has asked the governor's office to advise us as to the role of this taskforce. Taskforce members have asked if we should be sending a report to the Governor on our efforts.

Website

The website will be moving to NH.gov in the near future. We need to come up with a name for the webpage - NHcruelty doesn't really address what the taskforce is doing - however, for people to remember it and not misspell the name it should be kept short. It was recommended that suggestions be sent to Dr. Zezula as soon as possible. Dr. Zezula will continue to be the contact for any website issues.

Other

All taskforce correspondence should be sent to Roni the taskforce secretary until Patrick returns from leave of absence as Senator Roberge's aide. Her email address is noabuse@inhumane.org

Submitted by Roni McCall,
Through Their Eyes, the National Animal Abuse Registry